

MARVEL

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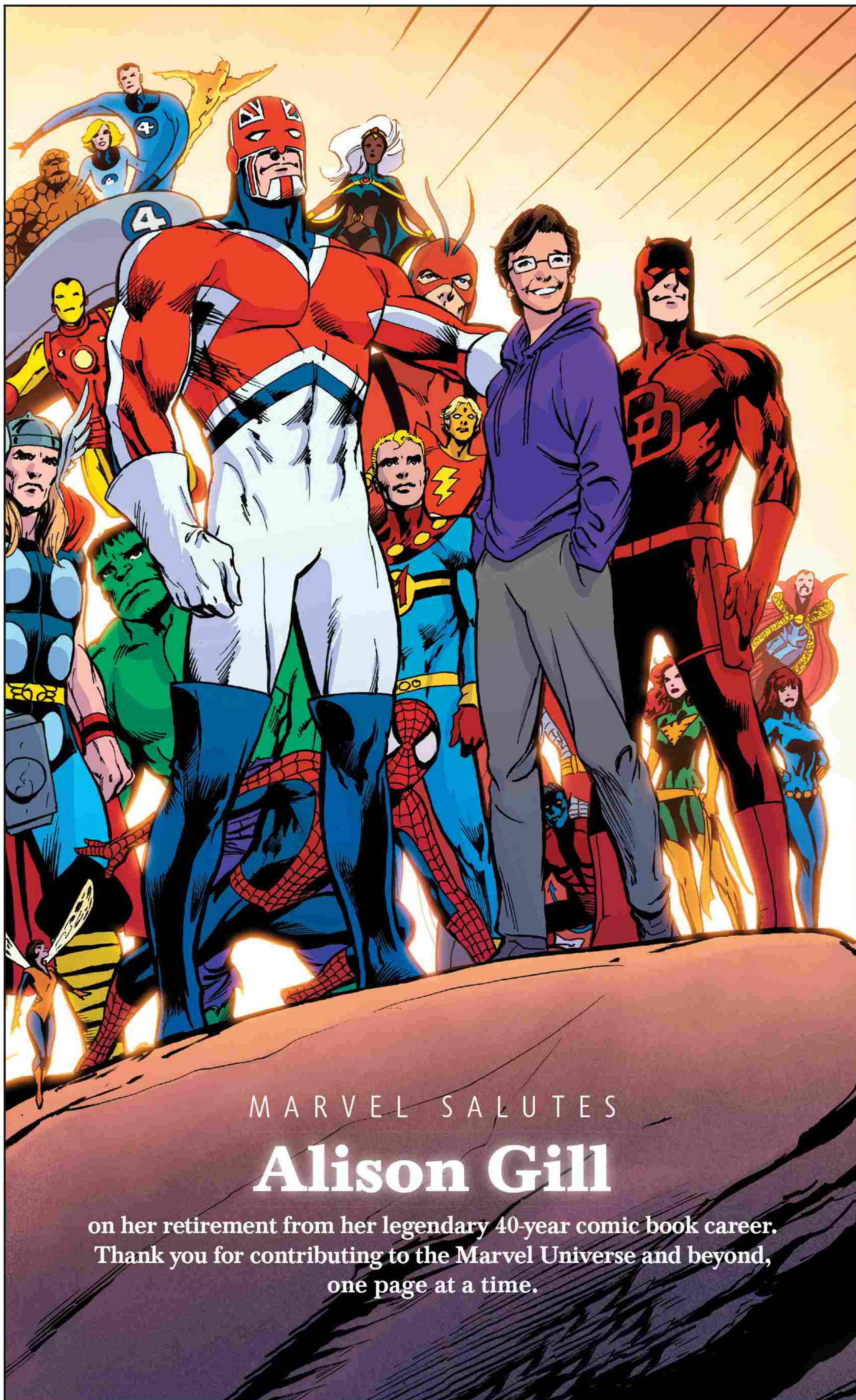
LGY#264

BENJAMIN PERCY • CARLOS NIETO • BRYAN VALENZA

GHOST RIDER



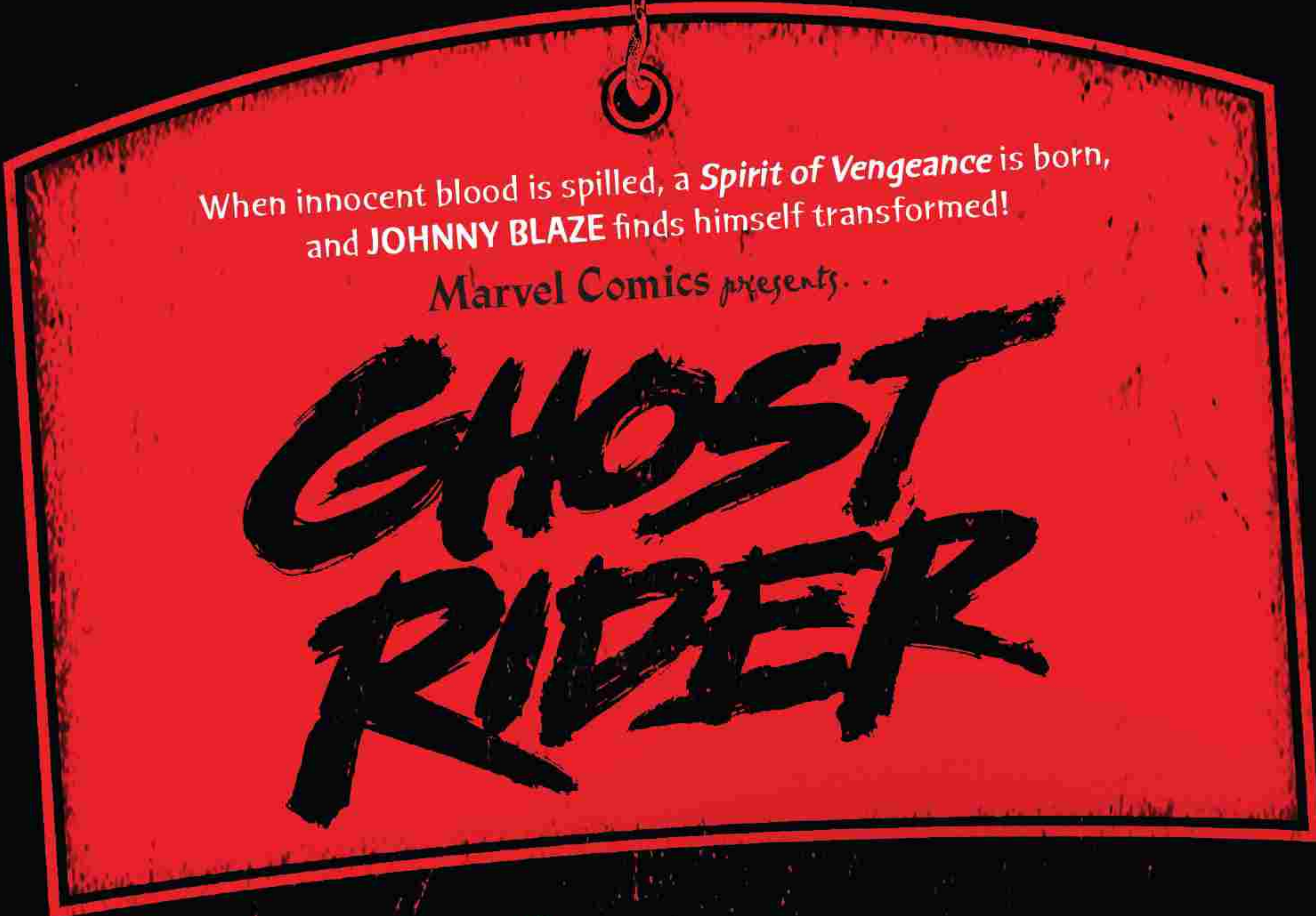
#B



MARVEL SALUTES

Alison Gill

on her retirement from her legendary 40-year comic book career.
Thank you for contributing to the Marvel Universe and beyond,
one page at a time.



When innocent blood is spilled, a *Spirit of Vengeance* is born,
and **JOHNNY BLAZE** finds himself transformed!

Marvel Comics presents...

GHOST RIDER

*"Teach Your
Children Hell"*

BENJAMIN PERCY

writer

CARLOS NIETO

artist

BRYAN VALENZA

color artist

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DAVE McCAIG**

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NOAH SHARMA *assistant editor*
DARREN SHAN *editor*
C.B. CEBULSKI *editor in chief*

PREVIOUSLY...

Talia Warroad was a former S.H.I.E.L.D. and F.B.I. agent with an expertise in the occult and the supernatural. Assigned to hunt down the Ghost Rider, Warroad was forced to team up with her original target. Eventually, this led to a romantic relationship with the Rider's human host, Johnny Blaze!

But once upon a time, Talia was just another troubled teen with an interest in the occult and a dangerous crush. Seeking to understand her mystic abilities, Talia fell under the sway of the Cult of Mephisto and their leader, Stefan Skaar. And though her parents sought Doctor Strange's help, he found that Talia had stepped farther into darkness than he had realized.

Now Talia has discovered that Stefan is building an army of disaffected youth loyal to Mephisto disguised as a remote boarding school. Sending a Moonchild, a homunculus made from a combination of her and Johnny's powers, to infiltrate the school, Talia knows that, unless she and the Rider do something, her past will play out again...on a much wider scale!

COLORADO.

WHAT
DO YOU SEE,
TALIA?

I SEE
WHAT THE MOON-
CHILD SEES,
JOHNNY.

AND I
FEEL WHAT
IT FEELS
TOO.

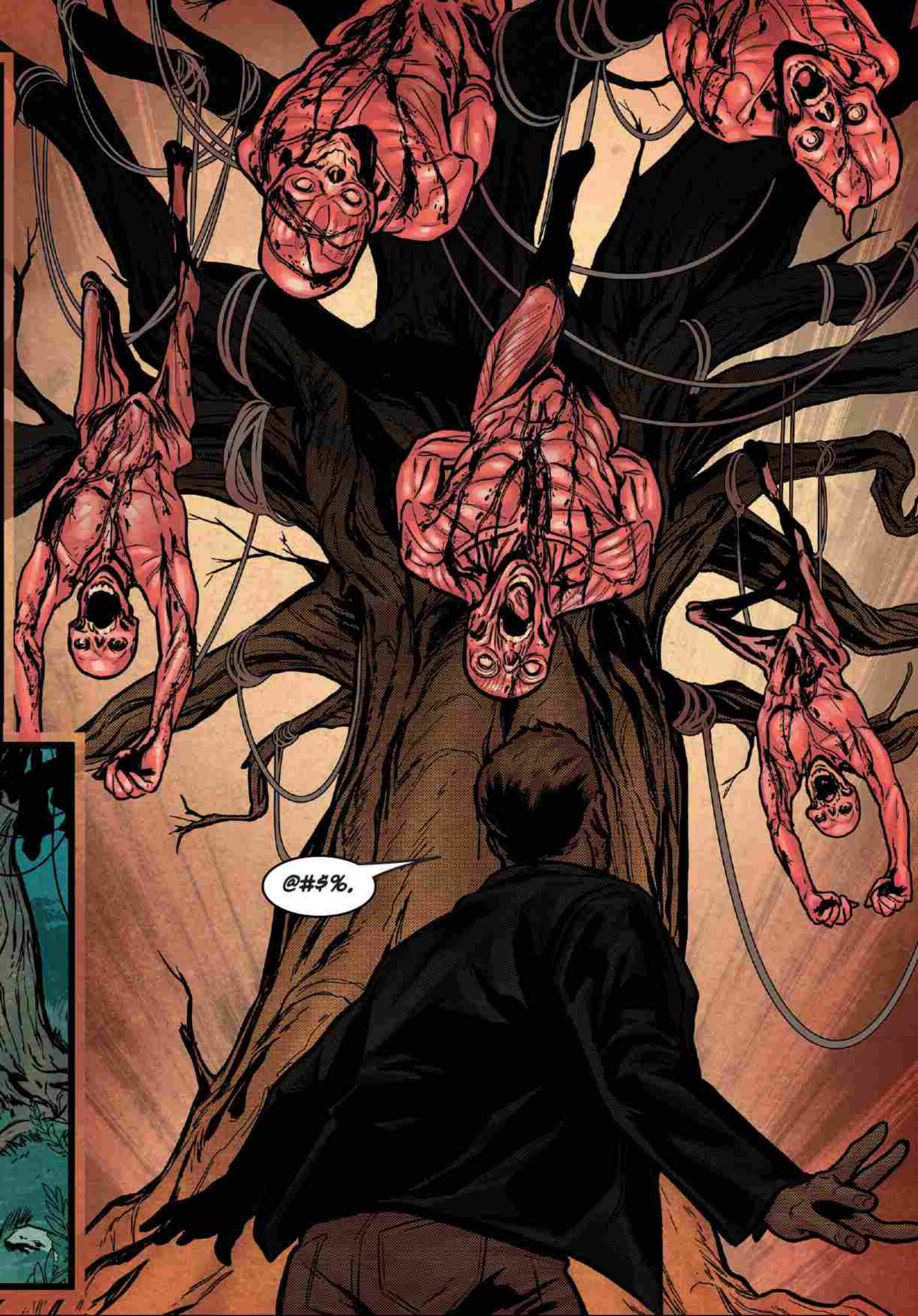
I'M LIKE
A COLD HAND
REACHING INTO
THE DARKNESS
BELOW A BED.

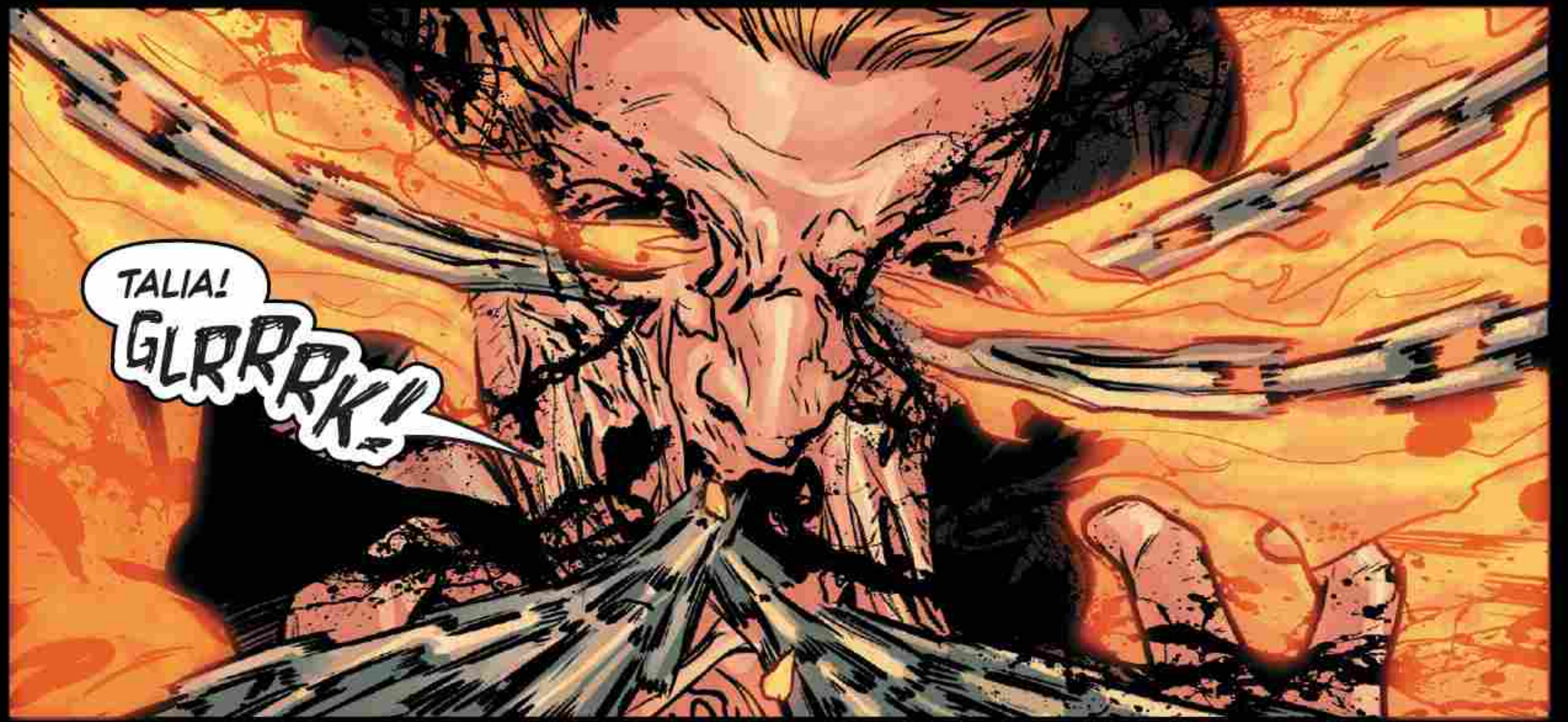
THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL
FOR TROUBLED YOUTH

MY NERVES ARE
LIKE CREEPING
SPIDERS, AND MY
MOUTH TASTES
LIKE THE BLOOD OF
A BITTEN TONGUE,
AND MY SKIN IS LIKE
STONE COOLED BY
A DEEP RIVER.

MY BREATH
IS THE AUTUMN
WIND THAT
CREAKS OPEN
A DOOR.

I MOVE WITH
THE SILENCE
YOU FIND INSIDE
COFFINS.





OF COURSE, THIS
ISN'T THE FIRST
TIME I'VE BEEN
LOST IN THE
WILDERNESS.



**THE PAST. BOSTON.
HOME OF TALIA WARROAD.**



ALL THOSE YEARS AGO,
WHEN MY PARENTS
REACHED OUT TO
DOCTOR STRANGE FOR
HELP, HE SAW THAT MY
HOUSE WAS STAINED.

HE RECOGNIZED
THAT YEARS AND
YEARS OF MY
ANGST AND
ANGER AND
RESENTMENT
AND CHAOTIC
RITUALS...



...HAD SOAKED
INTO THE WOOD
AND TILE AND
DRYWALL.



HE KNEW THAT
CLEANSING IT OF ITS
DARKNESS WAS THE
FIRST STEP TOWARD
HELPING ME.



THE HOUSE HAD
GROWN BIGGER
ON THE INSIDE THAN
ON THE OUTSIDE,
WARPED BY MAGIC.



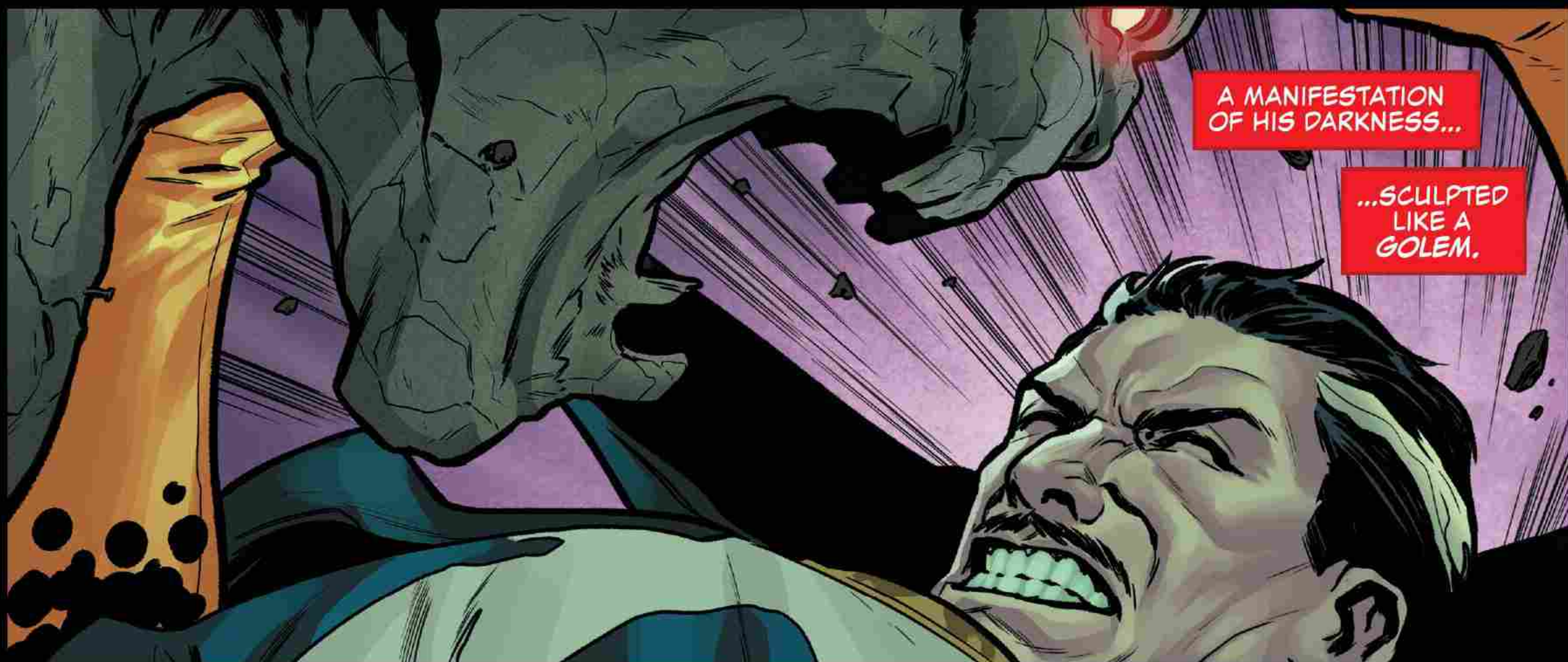
AND IT
WAS HOST TO
SOMETHING
FOUL.

IT WAS
AND WAS NOT
MEPHISTO.



A MANIFESTATION
OF HIS DARKNESS...

...SCULPTED
LIKE A
GOLEM.



**PRESENT DAY.
COLORADO.**

**NOW JOHNNY
AND I HAVE CRAFTED
SOMETHING SIMILAR.
A BINDING OF
OUR TROUBLED
ESSENCES.**

**I MOVED
WITH THE
MOONCHILD
THROUGH THE
SCHOOL.**

**I SAW
LABORATORIES
THAT
OFFERED AN
EDUCATION
IN PAIN.**

**LIBRARIES
STACKED WITH
DEMONIC
ARCANA.**

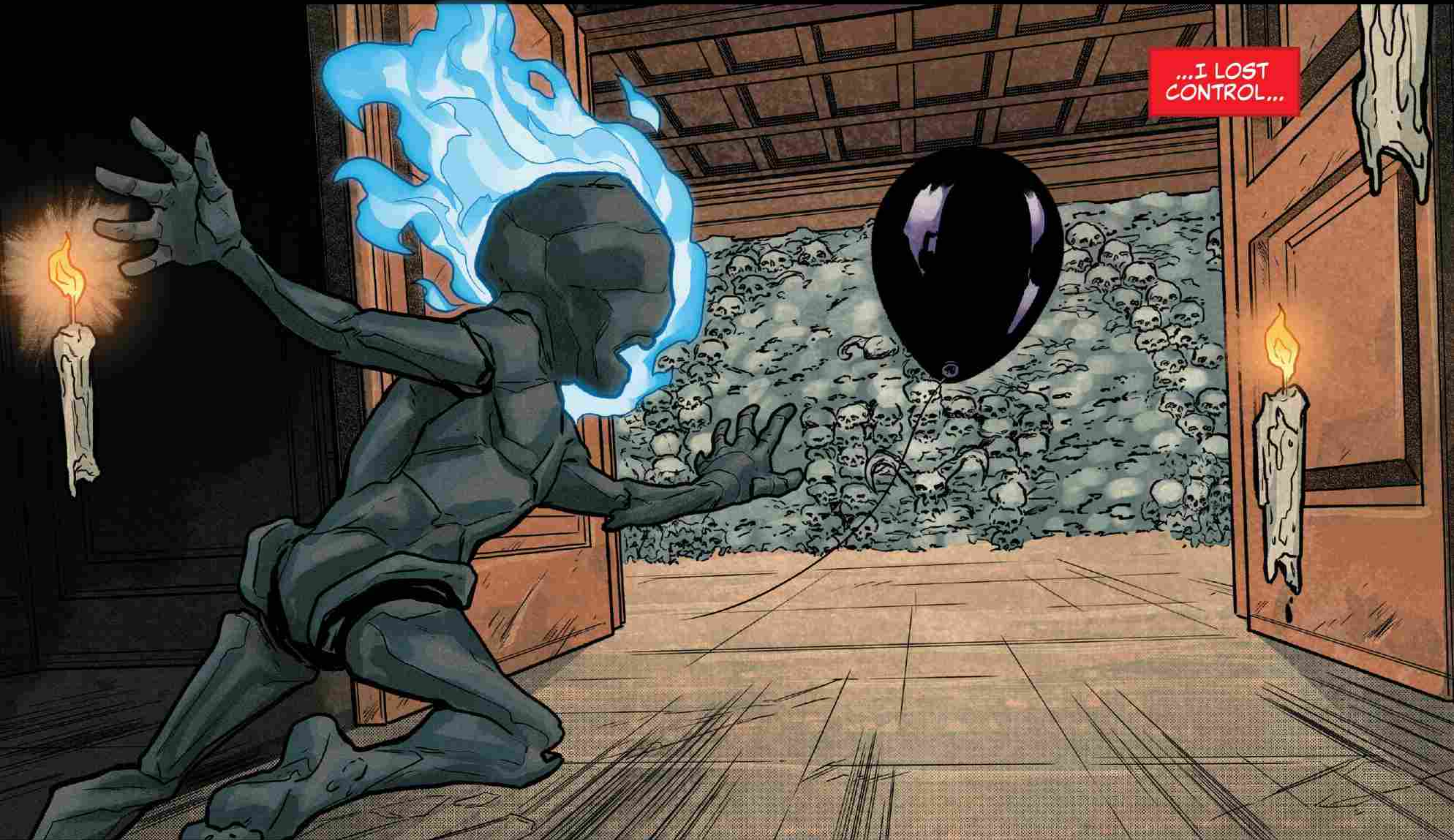
**AND
BLOOD
SPORT.**



BUT
BECAUSE OF
WHAT WAS
HAPPENING
OUTSIDE...



...I LOST MY
CONNECTION...



...I LOST
CONTROL...



...AND SOMEONE
WAS WAITING TO
ENLIST THE CHILD
AS THEIR OWN.

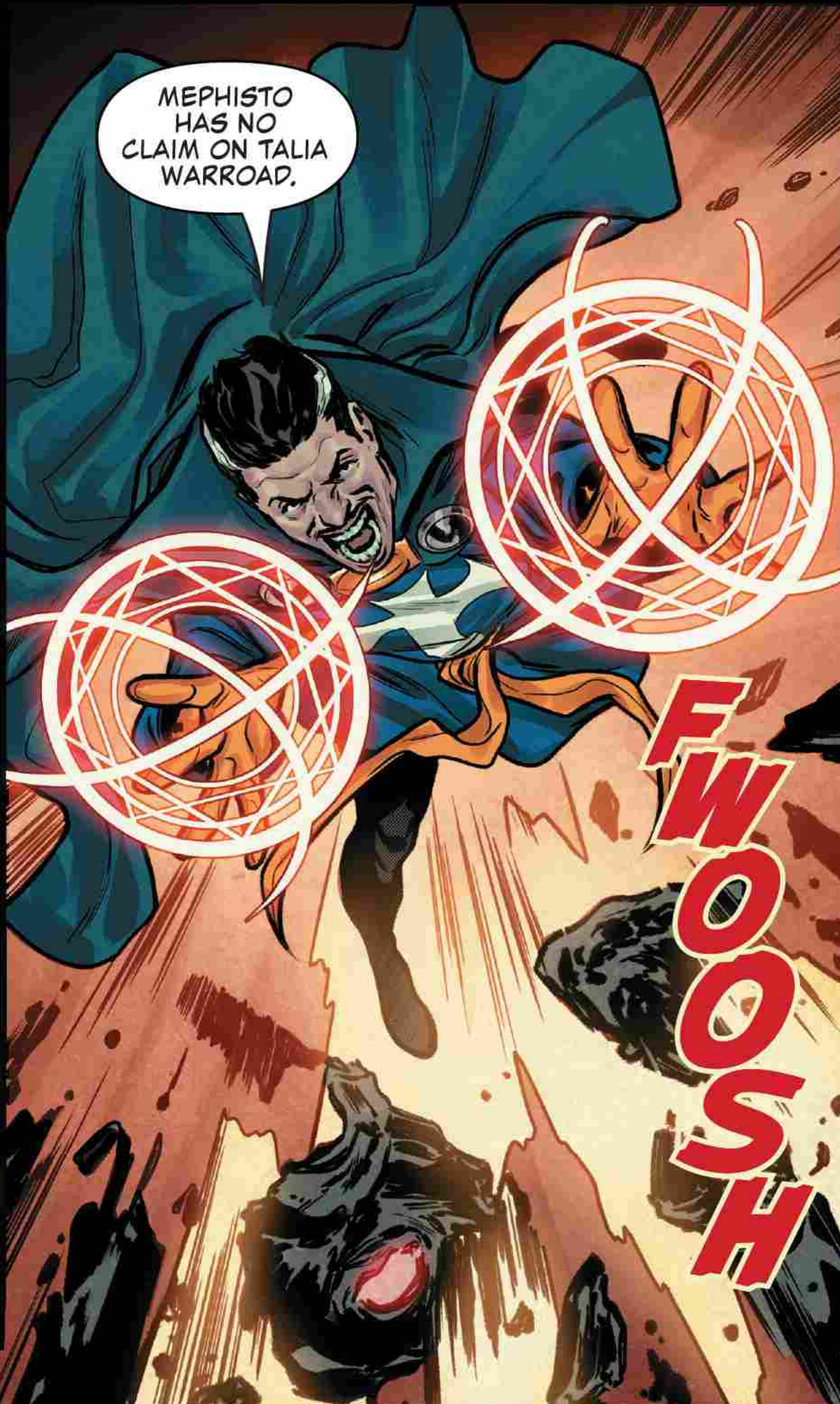


THE PAST.



BE GONE
FROM THIS
PLACE, FOUL
BEAST!

MEPHISTO
HAS NO
CLAIM ON TALIA
WARROAD.



FW
OO
SH



SNFF
SNFF



THEY
NEVER
LOVED
ME.

THEY
WISHED
I WASN'T
DIFFERENT.
THEY
WISHED I
WAS LIKE
EVERY-
BODY
ELSE.



WELL,
I WISH
THEY
WERE
DEAD.

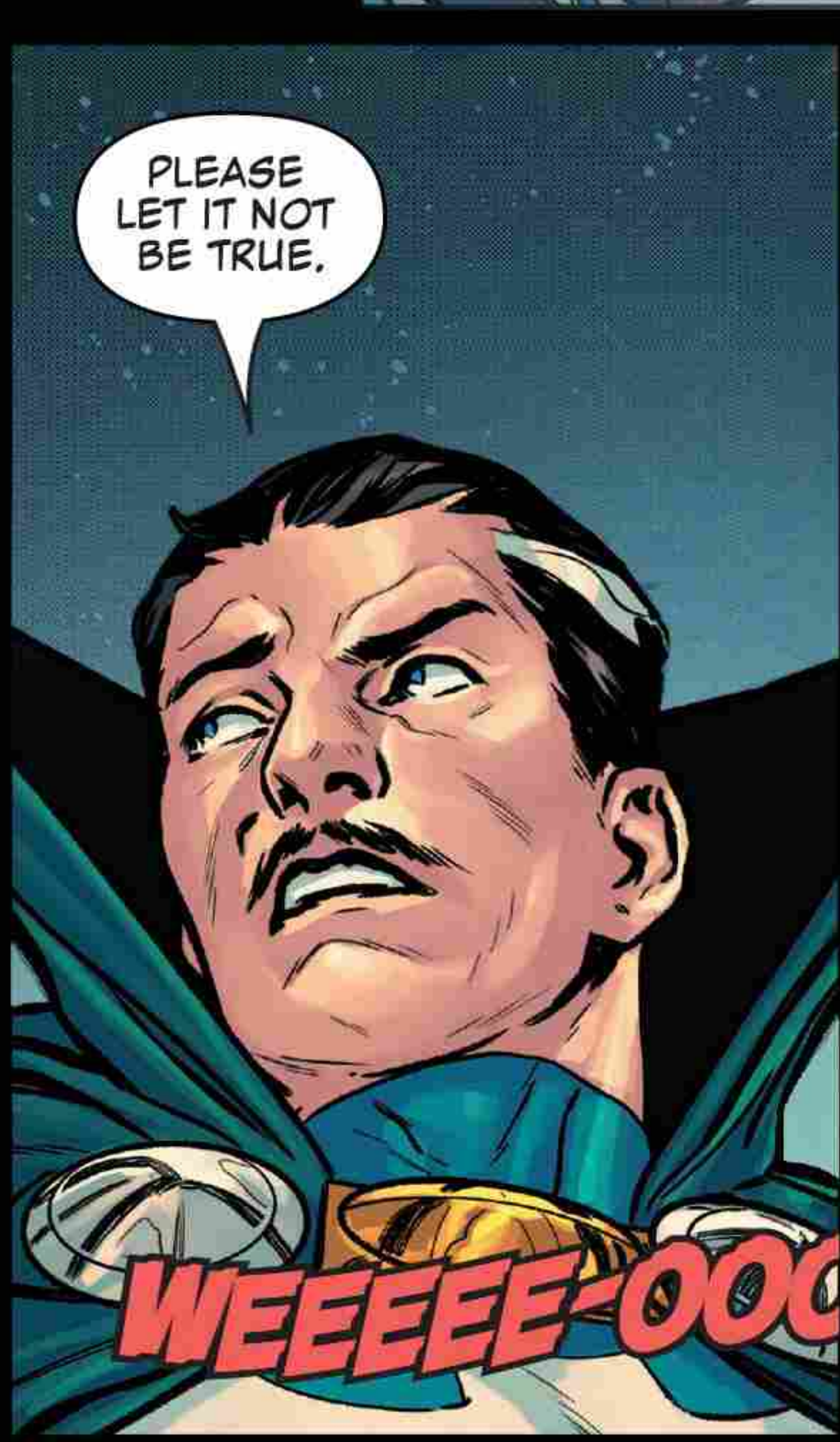


AND I
FINALLY
GOT MY
WISH.

THEY'RE...



...DEEEEDAAA.



THE PRESENT.

RELEASE
HER!

GAK!

WHATEVER
FORCE INHABITS
YOU...

JOHNNY!

...YOU ARE
STILL MADE OF
WOOD THAT
SPLINTERS.

MMMAARR!





I WAS
SWALLOWED
UP THEN...

...WHILE
THE RIDER
FOUGHT TO
SAVE ME.

FWOOOSH

THERE WAS
A PART OF ME
THAT FELT
GRATEFUL.

AND ANOTHER
PART THAT
FELT BOTH
GUILTY AND
RESENTFUL.

SHK

THIS
WAS ALL
HAPPENING
BECAUSE
OF ME.



I HAD
DRAGGED
JOHNNY
INTO THIS...

...JUST AS I
HAD DRAGGED
MY PARENTS
INTO THIS.

EVERYONE
AROUND ME
WAS DOOMED
TO SUFFER.

AND IT DIDN'T
MATTER HOW
MANY DEMONS
I SENT BACK TO
THE SULFUR
PITS...

...I COULDN'T
MAKE UP FOR
THE HELL I'D
BROUGHT INTO
THIS WORLD.

PLEASE!

WE
NEED TO
HURRY.

KREEEENCH

RRRR

KREEEENCH

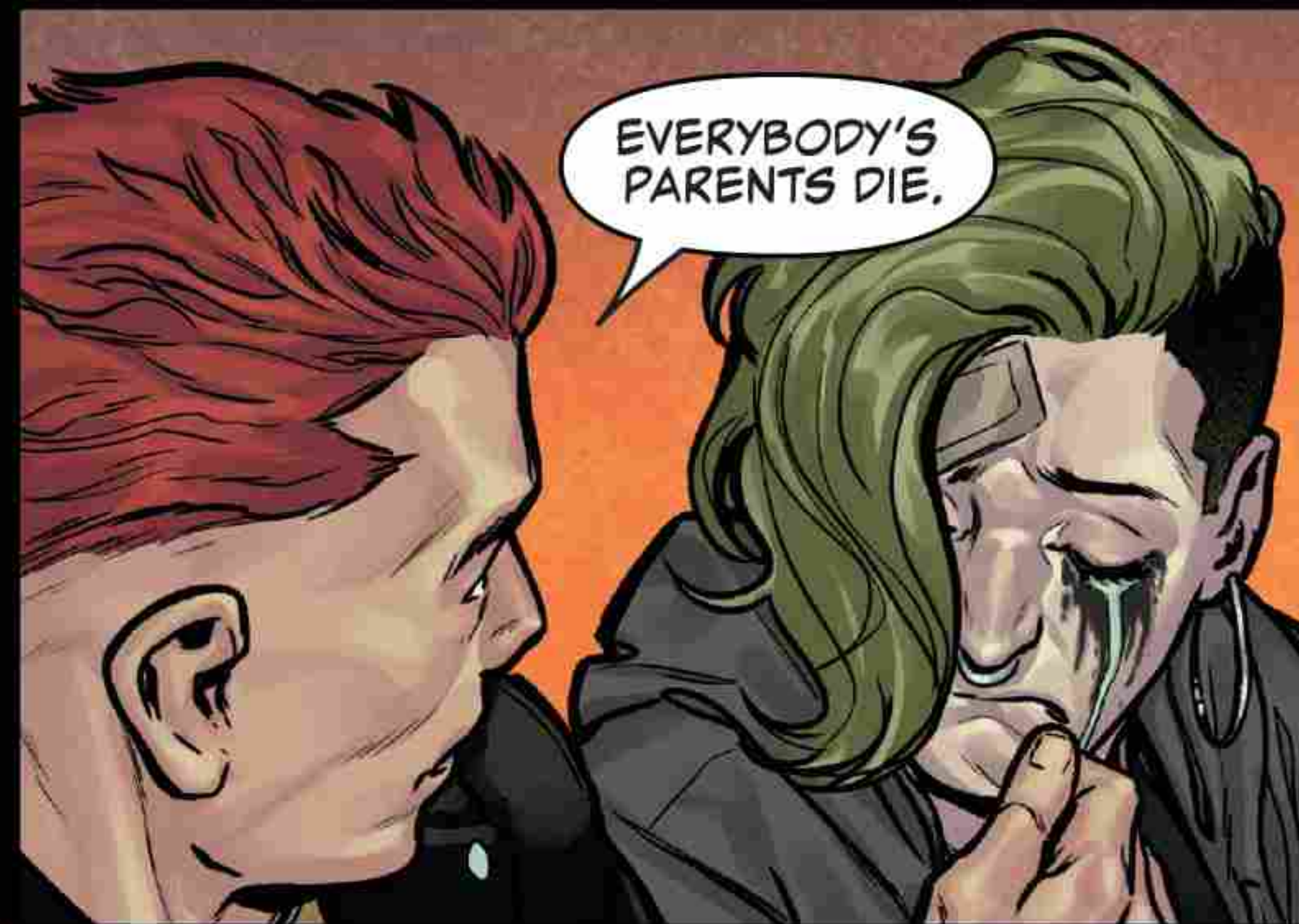
THE PAST.
MASSACHUSETTS.



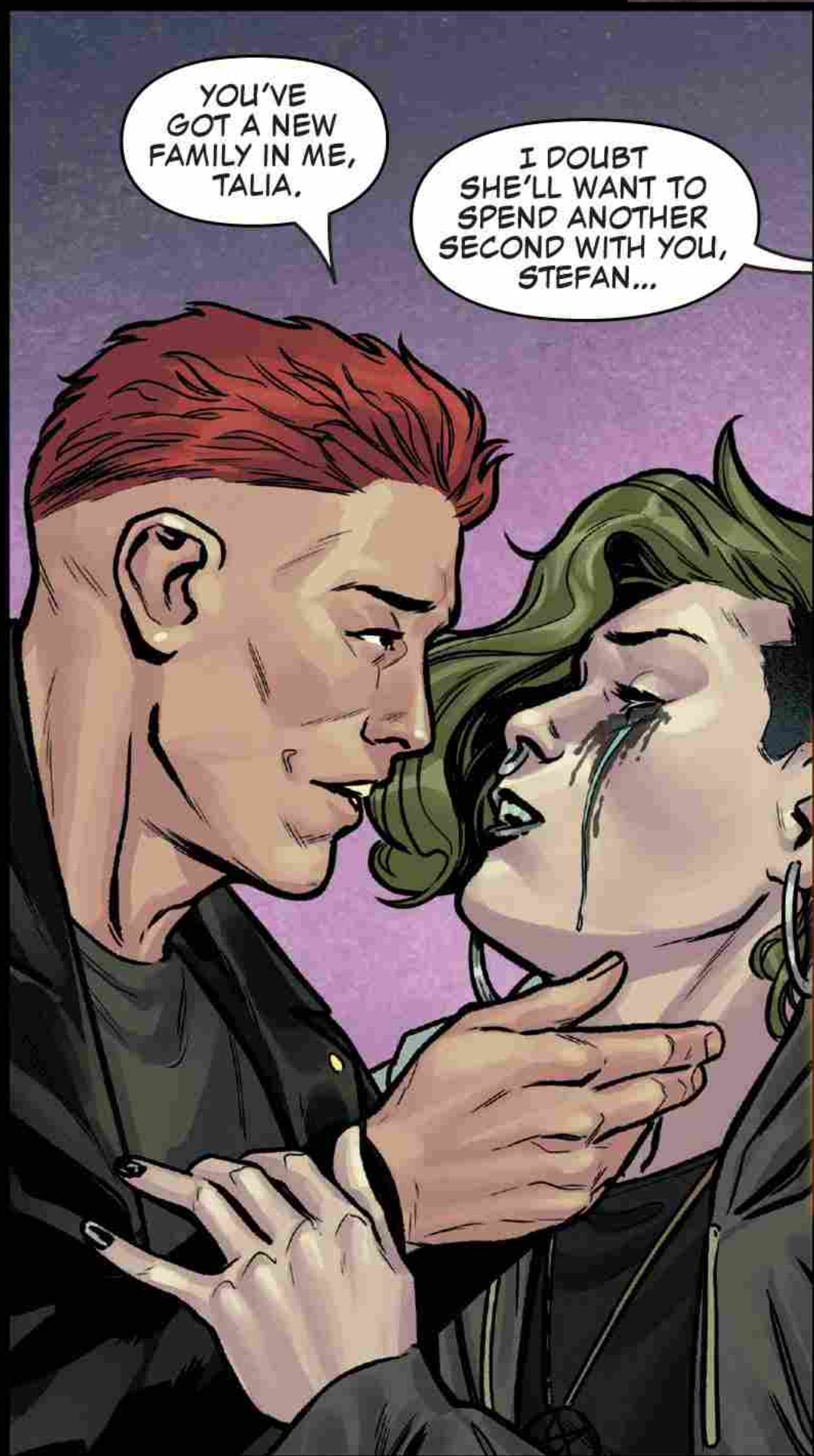
IT HURTS
NOW, I KNOW.
BECAUSE THE
CUT IS
FRESH.



BUT IT'LL
HEAL. YOU'LL
MOVE ON.

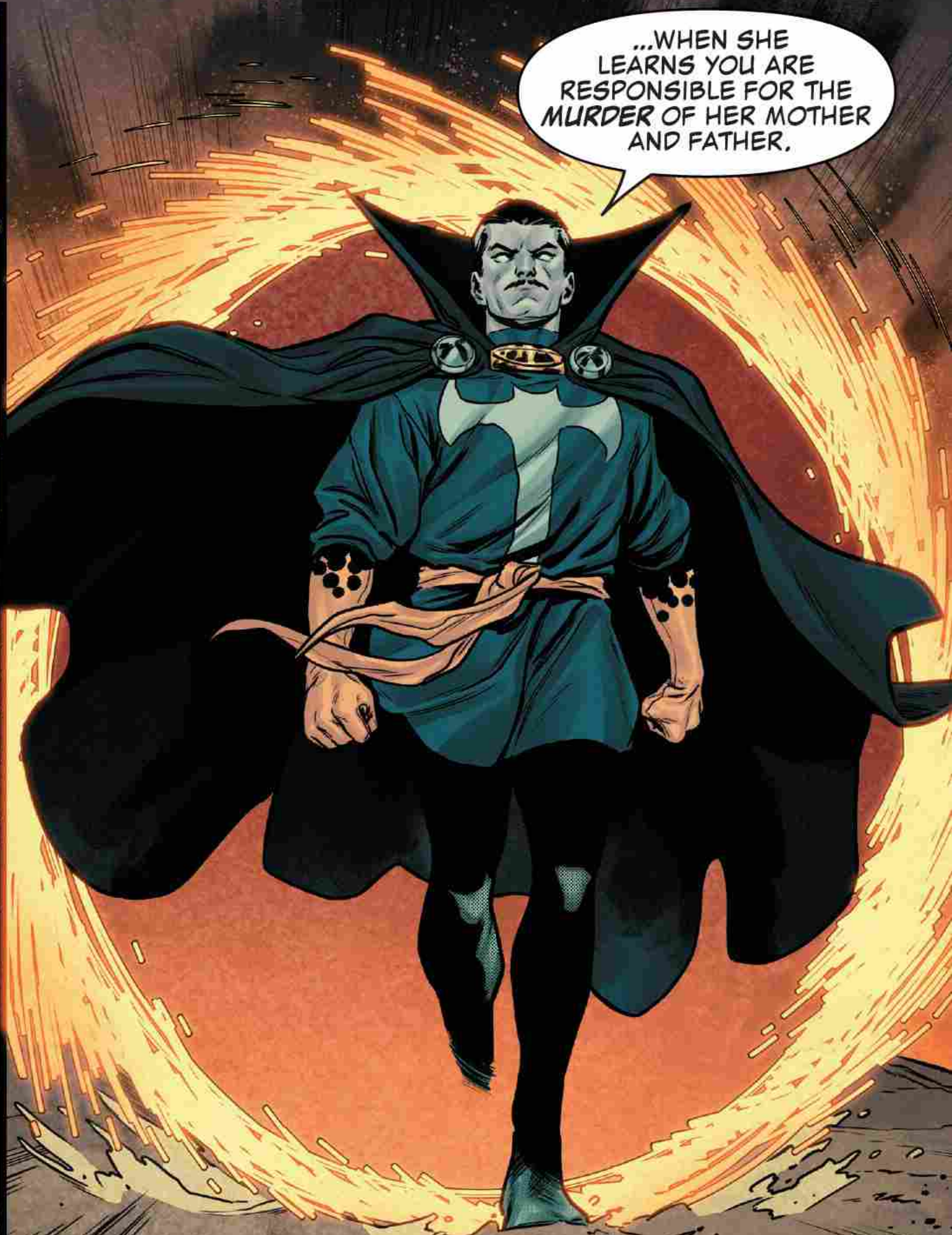


EVERYBODY'S
PARENTS DIE.

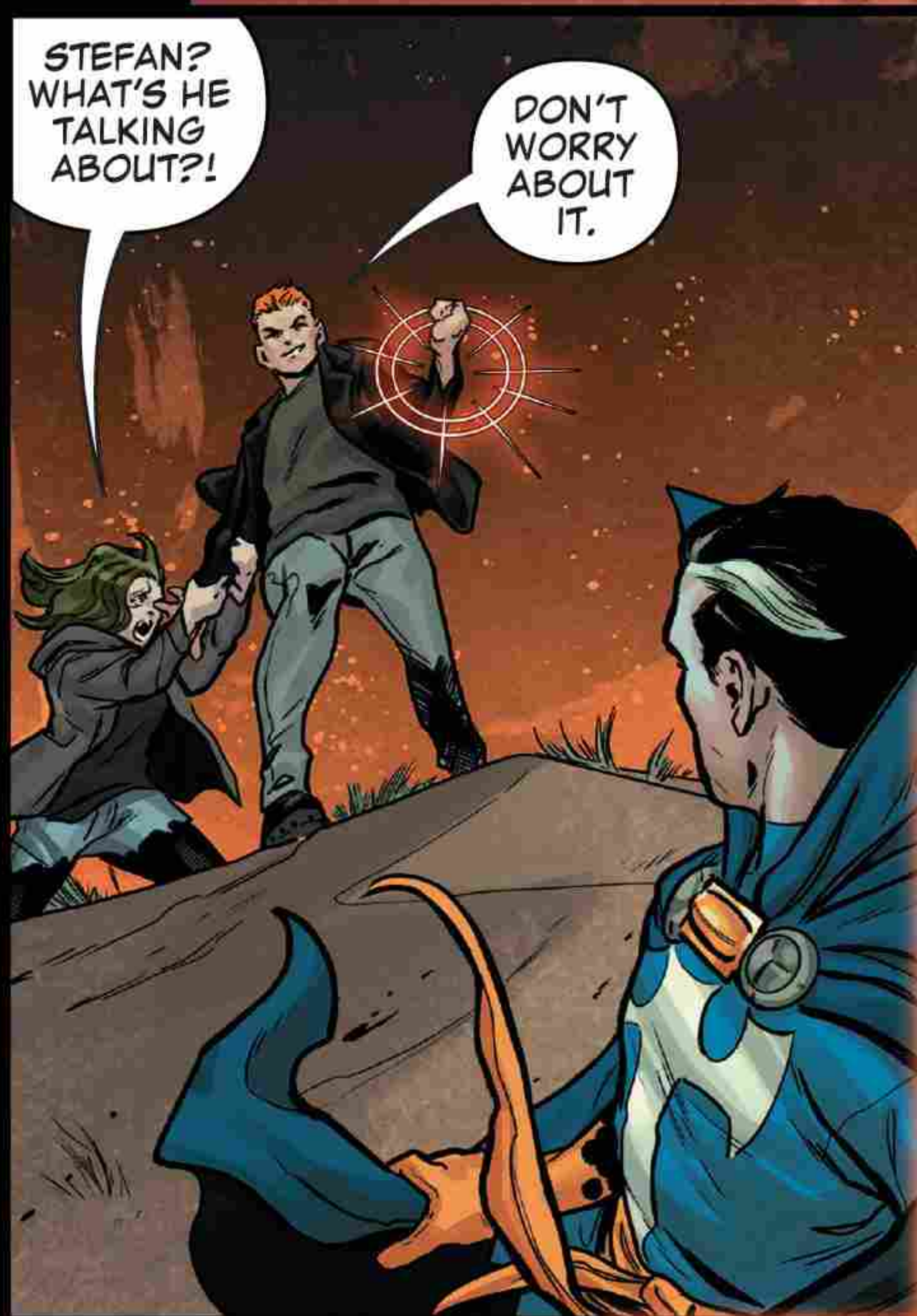


YOU'VE
GOT A NEW
FAMILY IN ME,
TALIA.

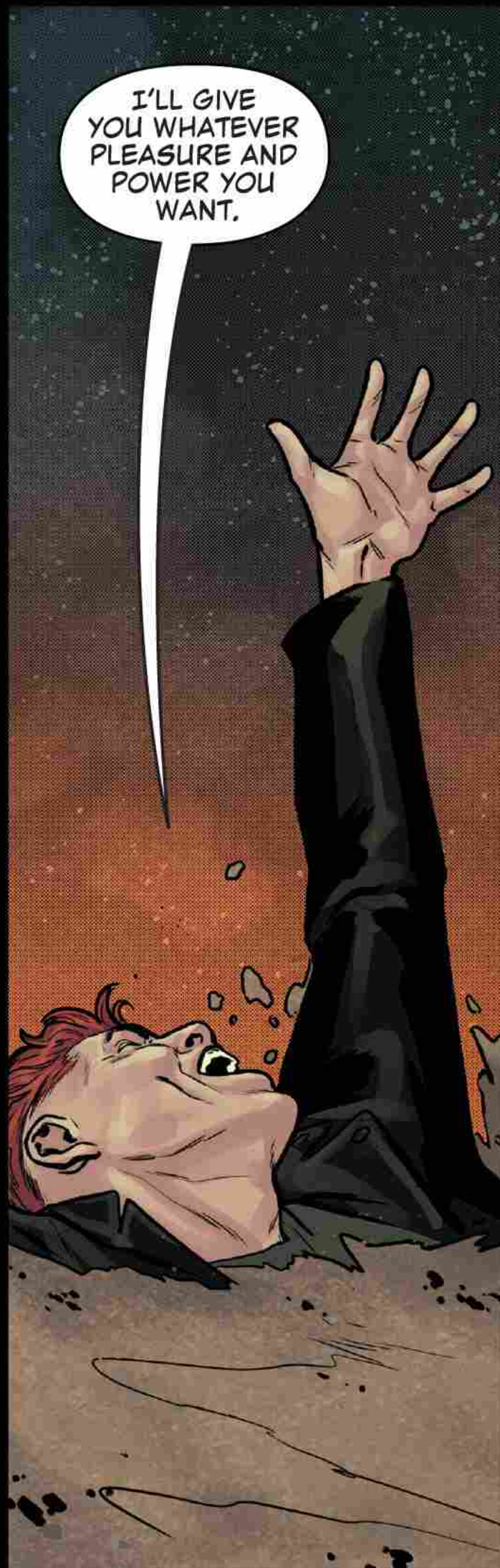
I DOUBT
SHE'LL WANT TO
SPEND ANOTHER
SECOND WITH YOU,
STEFAN...



...WHEN SHE
LEARNS YOU ARE
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
MURDER OF HER MOTHER
AND FATHER.









ENOUGH!

COME WITH ME, TALIA.

YOU'RE A RAW, UNCOUTH TALENT.

BUT I CAN TEACH YOU. I CAN REFINE YOU.

@#& YOU.

@#& BOTH OF YOU.

I'M DONE FOLLOWING ANY ROAD BUT MY OWN.

PRESENT.
COLORADO.



MY FAILURE
TO STOP
STEFAN
SKAAR...



...MEANT THAT THIS
SCHOOL, IN A WAY,
WAS FULL OF MY
NEGLECTED
CHILDREN.





BEEN
A WHILE,
TALIA.

DID YOU KNOW--
AFTER WE LAST SAW
EACH OTHER--DOCTOR
STRANGE SENT ME
TO THE DUNGEON
DIMENSION?



BUT I'VE NEVER
MET A LOCK I
COULDN'T
PICK.

EVENTUALLY.



YOU'VE
BEEN BUSY.

RUINING
THE LIVES AND
MESSING UP THE
HEADS OF A WHOLE
NEW GENERATION
OF KIDS.



YOU
KNOW...I ALWAYS
IMAGINED THE TWO OF
US WOULD ONE DAY
HAVE A CHILD.

BUT IF THIS GRAVE-
DIRT PUPPET IS ALL YOU'RE
CAPABLE OF PRODUCING, I
THINK I'M BETTER OFF
WITHOUT YOU.



"I'VE GOT ALL
KINDS OF
CHILDREN.



"A WHOLE
SCHOOL FULL
OF THEM.



"AND I'VE TAUGHT
THEM WELL."



GO ON.
SHOW MOMMY
YOUR NICE
BALLOON.

THIS WORLD REWARDS THE
NORMALS. THE ONES WHO
PUNCH THEIR TIME CARDS AND
GO TO BED BY TEN AND NEVER
QUESTION THE SYSTEM.

IT'S THE REAL HELL.
A BEIGE-COLORED
HELL FULL OF FERTILIZED
LAWNS AND MORTGAGE
PAYMENTS AND
SOCIAL MEDIA
ALGORITHMS.

I'M HERE FOR
THE FREAKS WHO
ACTUALLY HAVE THE
POWER TO BRING
THAT WHOLE STUPID,
PUNISHING WORLD
CRASHING
DOWN.

I GET TO THEM BEFORE
THEY'RE INDOCTRINATED AND
DIPLOMAED AND NUMBED BY
PHARMACEUTICALS.



YOU
USED TO
UNDERSTAND
THAT
DESIRE.

POP



BUT NOW
YOU'RE WHAT?
LIKE, A COP?
CHASING DOWN
SINNERS?

@#%&
PATHETIC.



IT WAS NICE
SEEING YOU AGAIN,
TALIA. BRIEFLY.

YOU'LL
BE DEAD
SOON.

THE
DARKNESS
-KOFF- WAS
ALWAYS
INSIDE
ME...



...YOU WERE
-KOFF KOFF- THE ONE
WHO TAUGHT ME TO
CONTROL IT.



"BUT YOU'RE
WRONG ABOUT
THOSE KIDS."

ALL OF YOUR
ANGER...ALL OF
YOUR HATE...

...ALL OF YOUR
TRESPASSES...



"THEY DON'T WANT
TO HURT THEMSELVES
OR OTHERS, NO MATTER
WHAT THEY SAY."

...I WILL
SWALLOW.



YOU ARE
FORGIVEN.

"ALL
THEY WANT
IS LOVE!"



THE THING
IS ~~IS~~ KOFF- I WAS
A BETTER STUDENT
THAN YOU WERE
A TEACHER.

I WAS
BETTER
THAN YOU
THEN.



AND I'M A
HELL OF A LOT
BETTER THAN
YOU NOW.

FWOOSH



I'VE SEEN
GHOSTS MY
WHOLE LIFE.

BUT THERE
ARE ONLY TWO
I'M SCARED OF.



MY MOTHER
AND FATHER.

BECAUSE
THEY'D BE
ALIVE IF NOT
FOR ME.



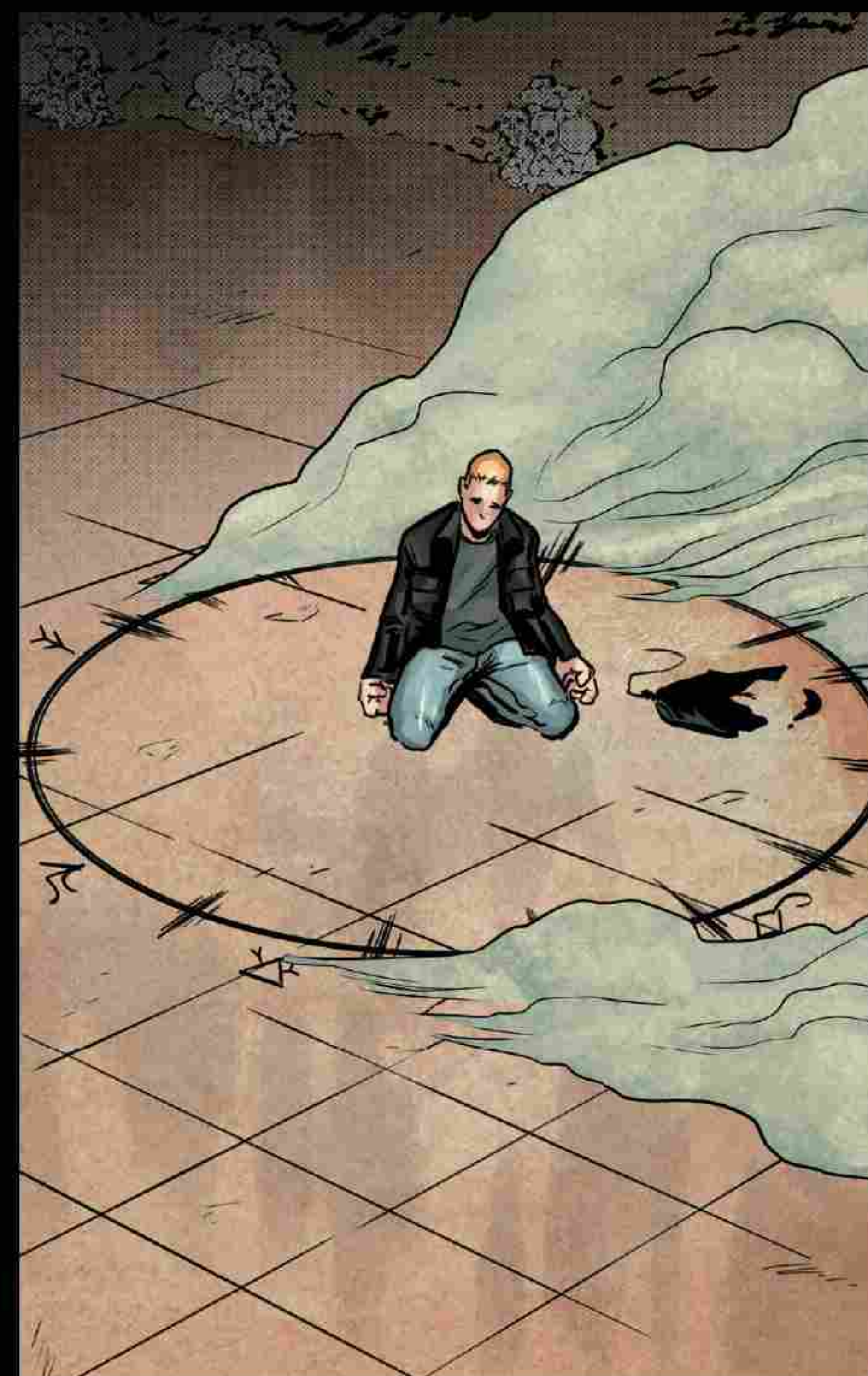
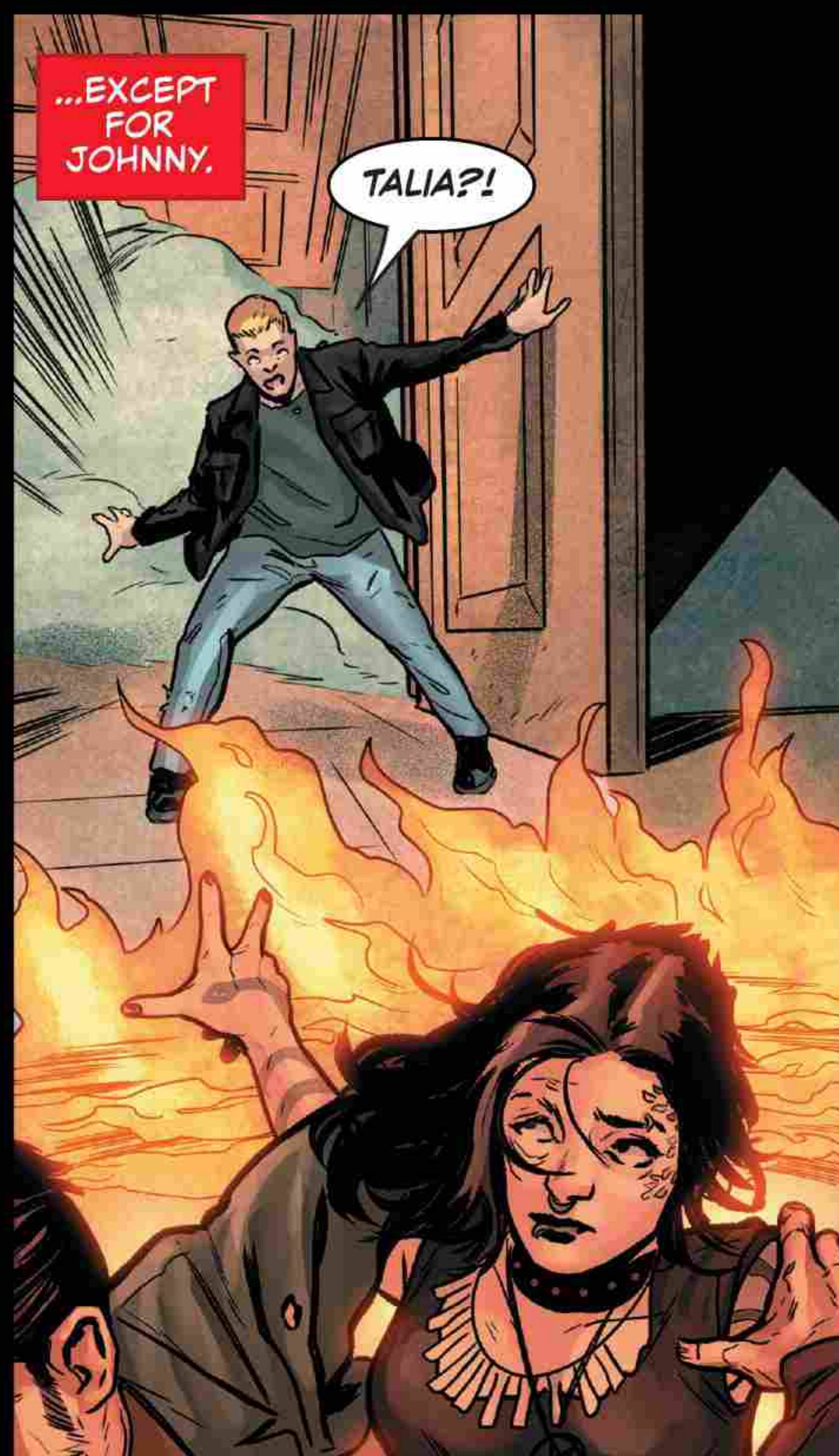
WHEN I WAS A CHILD AND
I TOLD MY MOTHER I WAS
SCARED OF THE DARK, SHE
TOLD ME TO CLOSE MY EYES.

SHE DIDN'T REALIZE
THE DARKNESS I FOUND
INSIDE MYSELF WAS
EVEN MORE PROFOUND.



MY EYES
ARE WIDE
OPEN NOW.

I'M NOT AFRAID
ANYMORE.



I GOT THE KIDS HOME
TO THEIR FAMILIES...

I'D DO ANYTHING TO
HAVE WHAT THEY HAVE.

BUT ALONE'S
WHERE I BELONG.

...OR
DAMNED.

...AND TOLD THE
PARENTS TO KEEP
THEM CLOSE.

SOMEONE TO LOVE.
SOMEONE TO
LOVE ME BACK.

ANYBODY WHO
GETS CLOSE TO ME
ENDS UP DEAD...

THE ONLY
ONE I CAN'T
SEEM TO QUIT
IS THE SPIRIT.

BUT I'VE BEEN
HEARING THINGS
AND SEEING
THINGS LATELY
THAT MAKE
ME WONDER.

A RAVEN CAWING, THE
WIND BLOWING THROUGH A
FOREST, THE EMBERS IN
A CAMPFIRE SHIFTING.

THEY ALL SEEM
TO BE WHISPERING
THE SAME THING...

YOUR
TIME AS THE
GHOST RIDER IS
ABOUT TO COME
TO AN END.

**NOT
THE
END...**



NEXT ISSUE

Years ago, stunt cyclist Johnny Blaze was bonded with the Spirit of Vengeance by the demon Mephisto. Unwilling to be a monster, Johnny turned Hell's fury on the wicked, becoming the Ghost Rider. But heroism isn't what the Rider is meant for, and Johnny Blaze's time as the Spirit of Vengeance must come to an end. But who will be the new Spirit of Vengeance? And what does this new world look like? Find out in this extra-sized first issue!